

“Dealing With Hard Times”



Ecclesiastes 9:12

¹² For man also does not know his time: Like fish taken in a cruel net, Like birds caught in a snare,
So the sons of men *are* snared in an evil time,
When it falls suddenly upon them. (NKJV)

¹² People can never predict when hard times might come. Like fish in a net or birds in a trap, people are caught by sudden tragedy. (NLT)

No guarantee of certainty
No immunity against tragedy

What's the right question?

Why?

Why is this happening?

Why me?

Why now?

OR

When?

When will hard
times come?

What?

What is the lesson?

“Life is pain, your highness.
Anyone who tells you differently
is selling something.”

From the movie, ‘The
Princess Bride’

1. False Expectations

John 16: 33 NLT

³³ “I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. **Here on earth, you will have many trials and sorrows.** But take heart, because I have overcome the world.”

John 15: 20 NLT

²⁰ Do you remember what I (Jesus) told you? **‘A slave is not greater than the master.’**

1 Peter 4:13 NLT

¹³ “Dear friends, **don’t be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you.**”

2. Overwhelming Emotions

1 Samuel 30: 1-6 NIV

¹ David and his men reached Ziklag on the third day. Now the Amalekites had raided the Negev and Ziklag. They had attacked Ziklag and burned it, ² and had taken captive the women and everyone else in it, both young and old. They killed none of them but carried them off as they went on their way. ³ When David and his men reached Ziklag, they found it destroyed by fire and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive ⁴ **So David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep...** ⁶ David was **greatly distressed** because the men were talking of stoning him; **each one was bitter in spirit** because of his sons and daughters...

3. Transactional Mindset

Job 1: 8-9 NLT

⁸ Then the LORD asked Satan, “Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless—a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil.”

⁹ Satan replied to the LORD, “Yes, but **Job has good reason to fear God.** ¹⁰ **You have always** put a wall of protection around him and his home and his property. **You have made** him prosper in everything he does. Look how rich he is! ¹¹ But **reach out and take away everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face!**”

4. Distracting Voices

1 Samuel 30: 6 NIV

⁶ “David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. **But David found strength in the Lord his God.**”

Job 2: 7-10 NLT

⁷... Job with terrible boils from head to foot. ⁸ Job scraped his skin with a piece of broken pottery as he sat among the ashes. ⁹ His wife said to him, “Are you still trying to maintain your integrity? Curse God and die.”

¹⁰ **But Job replied,** “You talk like a foolish (*‘morally deficient’*) woman. Should we accept only good things from the hand of God and never anything bad?” So in all this, Job said nothing wrong.

“God knows how men speak
when they are desperate.”

Derek Kidner

5. Remember God is...

God is GOODTRUEFAITHFULSOVEREIGN

Omniscient

Omnipotent

Omnipresent

Psalm 46:1-3 & 10 NIV

¹ God is our refuge and strength, **an ever-present help in trouble.**

² **Therefore we will not fear, though** the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, ³ though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.

¹⁰ He says, **“Be still, and know that I am God...”**

5. Remember God is...

God is GOODTRUEFAITHFULSOVEREIGN

Mark 4: 37-39 NIV

³⁷ But soon **a fierce storm came up**. High waves were breaking into the boat, and it began to fill with water. ³⁸ Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. The disciples woke him up, shouting, **“Teacher, don’t you care that we’re going to drown?”**

³⁹ When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, **“Silence! Be still!”** Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm.

6. Direct questions to God

1 Samuel 30: 7-8 NIV

⁷ Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelek, “Bring me the ephod.” Abiathar brought it to him, ⁸ and David inquired of the LORD, “Shall I pursue this raiding party? Will I overtake them?”

Mathew 27:45-46 NIV

⁴⁵ From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. ⁴⁶ About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”)

7. Continue in hope

Isaiah 26:3-4 NIV

³You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. ⁴**Trust** in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD himself, is the Rock eternal.

Hebrews 10:23 NIV

²³“Let us **hold unswervingly** to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.”

Romans 12:12 NLT

¹²Rejoice in our confident hope. Be **patient** in trouble and keep on praying.

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